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Editorial

Taxonomy to be used in *Malimbus*

Starting from this issue, the taxonomy to be used in papers published in *Malimbus* is that of the BirdLife International checklist, to be found at <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/taxonomy>. Authors should follow this for the sequence and scientific names of all taxa, notably families, genera and species (these being the levels of classification used most in articles in *Malimbus*). Departures from this sequence and nomenclature will be permitted only if justification is provided when submitting the manuscript, and if that justification is considered adequate by the Editor and referees.

The Editor and WAOS Council have discussed this subject extensively over the past two years, and have made the decision to change from a more traditional arrangement at this point, now that the BirdLife checklist, in which taxonomic decisions are based on clearly stated criteria, is freely available on line.

While this change affects most notably the composition and sequence of families and of genera within them, and will therefore have a major effect on articles containing species lists, all authors are requested to ensure that the scientific names used are those in the latest version of the BirdLife list. This change brings the taxonomy followed in *Malimbus* up to date with the latest research and should allow it to remain so, as the BirdLife checklist is expected to be updated annually, incorporating the results of molecular and other studies of the identity and relationships of bird populations, as they are published.

There will be no change to our policy regarding the use of English and French names of birds. Names in French should preferably follow *Noms Français des Oiseaux du Monde* <http://www.digimages.info/listeoiseauxmonde/genre_cinfo.htm>, while names in English may follow the BirdLife checklist or should be names in long-established, common use in West Africa. Adjectives such as "African", "Common", "Eurasian" *etc.* should not be used when this serves only to distinguish a species found in Africa from a bird in a different continent.

These new guidelines are now incorporated into *Malimbus* Instructions for Authors, as published on the inside back cover of every issue, and on the WAOS web site at <http://malimbus.free.fr/instmale.htm>.

Alan TYE, Editor

La taxonomie à utiliser dans *Malimbus*

À partir du présent numéro, la taxonomie de référence pour les articles publiés dans *Malimbus* devra être celle de la liste de Birdlife International, disponible sur

<http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/taxonomy>. Les auteurs devront suivre celle-ci pour la séquence et les noms scientifiques de tous les taxa, notamment les familles, genres et espèces (soit les niveaux de classification utilisés dans la plupart des articles de *Malimbus*). S'écarter de cette séquence et nomenclature ne sera autorisé que si cela est justifié lors de la soumission du manuscrit et à condition que cette justification soit considérée comme adéquate par le Rédacteur en chef et les relecteurs.

Après une discussion approfondie à ce sujet au cours des deux années écoulées, le Rédacteur en chef et le Conseil de la SOOA ont pris la décision de remplacer la classification ancienne dès lors que la liste de Birdlife, dans laquelle les décisions taxonomiques sont basées sur des critères clairement établis, est aujourd'hui libre d'accès sur internet.

Bien que ce changement affecte surtout la composition et la séquence des familles et, à l'intérieur, des genres, d'où un impact majeur sur les articles contenant des listes d'espèces, tous les auteurs sont priés de vérifier que les noms scientifiques employés sont bien ceux de la dernière version de la liste de Birdlife. Ce changement met la taxonomie de référence dans *Malimbus* à jour avec les recherches les plus récentes et devrait lui permettre de le demeurer, la liste de Birdlife devant être mise à jour une fois par an, en incorporant les résultats des études génétiques et autres sur l'identité et les relations entre populations d'oiseaux une fois publiés.

Notre politique concernant l'emploi des noms anglais et français des oiseaux demeure inchangée. Les noms en Français devront de préférence suivre les *Noms Français des Oiseaux du Monde* <http://www.digimages.info/listeoiseauxmonde/genre_cinfo.htm>, tandis que les noms en Anglais devront suivre la liste de Birdlife ou bien devront être les noms employés de longue date et d'un usage commun en Afrique de l'Ouest. Des adjectifs tels que « Africain », « Commun », « Eurasien » etc. ne doivent pas être employés lorsqu'ils servent uniquement à distinguer une espèce que l'on trouve en Afrique d'un oiseau d'un autre continent.

Ces nouvelles lignes directrices sont maintenant incorporées dans les Instructions aux Auteurs de *Malimbus,* telles que publiées dans la 3ème de couverture de chaque numéro ainsi que sur le site internet de la SOOA à <http://malimbus.free.fr/instmalf.htm>

Alan TYE, Rédacteur en chef

First record of successful breeding of the Ibadan Malimbe *Malimbus ibadanensis*

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Summary

We monitored a pair of Ibadan Malimbe *Malimbus ibadanensis* nesting on an *Antiaris toxicaria* tree in farmland near Agbado Ekiti, SW Nigeria, April–June 2017. The nest was built mainly by the male but both parents fed the nestling. A fledgling was found being fed by adults, 12 days after the last activity at the nest was observed. Native trees left growing in farmland may be important breeding sites for this endangered regional endemic, and local communities need to be made more aware of it.

Résumé

Première observation d'une reproduction réussie du Malimbe d'Ibadan *Malimbus ibadanensis*. Nous avons suivi de près un couple du Malimbe d'Ibadan *Malimbus ibadanensis* nidifiant sur un arbre *Antiaris toxicaria*, sur des terres cultivées près d'Agbado Ekiti, au SW du Nigeria, en avril–juin 2017. Le nid a été construit principalement par le mâle mais les deux parents ont nourri la nichée. Un juvénile a été vu en train d'être nourri par les adultes 12 jours après qu'a été observée la dernière activité au nid. Les arbres indigènes qui poussent sur les terres cultivées peuvent être des sites importants de reproduction pour cette espèce menacée endémique de la région, et les communautés locales doivent y être davantage sensibilisées.

Introduction

The globally Endangered Ibadan Malimbe *Malimbus ibadanensis* is restricted to a small area in SW Nigeria (Elgood *et al.* 1994). A survey in its historical range estimated that only *c.* 2500 individuals remained, the low number being attributed to range contraction due to forest fragmentation (Manu *et al.* 2005a). However, a later sighting of this species outside its then known range suggested a need for conservation efforts beyond this area (Ajagbe *et al.* 2009). In addition, although there is some information about its breeding, no successful breeding attempt has ever been documented, indicating that additional studies were needed (Manu *et al.* 2005b). We present here the first report of successful breeding of the Ibadan Malimbe, at some distance from its previously reported localities.

Methods

We monitored one nest, covering the period from building to post-fledging, at intervals of *c.* 5 days from 15 Apr to 4 June, for a total of 30 h of focal observation during which we maintained a minimum distance of 30 m between the investigators and the nest tree. We recorded the vegetation within a 50 x 50 m quadrat around the nest site, covering the area where most activities (collection of nest materials, courtship display, resting, scanning and preening) were observed. Within the quadrat we identified, counted and measured the height (with a Nikon Forestry Pro Laser Rangefinder) and diameter at breast height (DBH) of trees > 2 m in height. We also recorded other bird species seen or heard within the quadrat, in case of interactions with the Ibadan Malimbes and their nest (unpubl. data). All error measures presented are SD.

Observations

We first sighted a pair of Ibadan Malimbes in farmland near Agbado Ekiti (7.6030°N, 5.5280°E, *c.* 411 m altitude; Fig. 1) on the cloudy and cool morning of 15 Apr 2017, at 11h00. The male was building a nest on an *Antiaris toxicaria* tree, whose measurements, along with those of other trees recorded in the quadrat around the nest tree, are given in Table 1. The ground vegetation within this area was mainly Cassava *Manihot esculenta* and weeds.

The nest (Fig. 2) was built mainly by the male using live tendrils of climbing plants. It was placed on the lowest branch of the tree at 7.1 m above ground level and was similar in structure to that described by Manu *et al.* (2005b). We could not ascertain the number of days it took to build the nest as it was near completion when first observed. Nevertheless, we monitored the remaining stage of nest construction for 8 h on two days: the male brought nest materials 40 times between 11h00 and 15h00

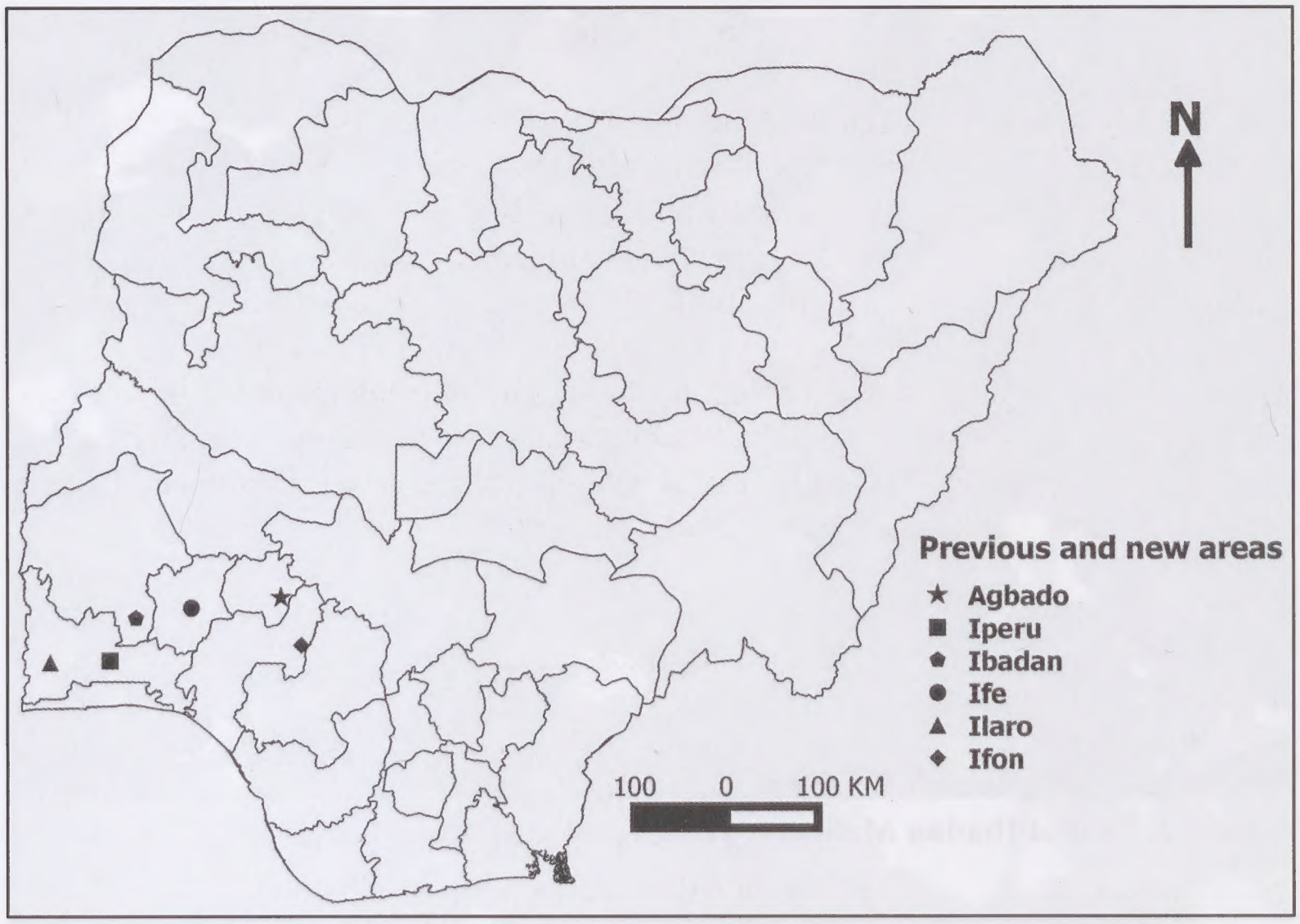

Figure 1. Location of the new sighting of the Ibadan Malimbe (the star) in relation to previously known areas.

on 15 April (10 times/h) and 58 times between 7h00 and 11h00 on 22 April (14.5 times/h), giving special attention to the elongated spout, the last part of the nest to be built. During nest construction, we saw the female enter the nest only once, when it spent 1 min. inside before returning to an Oil Palm *Elaeis guineensis* (12 m tall, 20 m from the nest tree) from where it scanned around. Nesting on the same tree were Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis* and Yellow-mantled Weaver *Ploceus tricolor*; this association has been reported in a previous study (Manu *et al.* 2005b). Unlike the

Table 1. Tree species recorded within a 50 x 50 m quadrat around the nest tree.

	Status	Number	Height (m)	DBH (m)
Antiaris toxicaria	Native	1	14.8	0.46
Elaeis guineensis	Native	10	15 ± 4.6	0.28 ± 0.3
Gliricidia sepium	Introduced	6	10 ± 4.2	0.12 ± 0.02
Lonchocarpus sericeus	Native	3	18 ± 1	0.32 ± 0.05
Pouteria alnifolia	Native	1	13	0.43
Senna siamea	Introduced	8	9 ± 3	0.18 ± 0.04
Total		**31**	**13.5 ± 12.8**	**0.29 ± 0.41**

Figure 2. Nest of Ibadan Malimbe, 22 Apr 2017 (photo: AGA).

Red-headed Malimbe, which placed its nest in the middle of the tree canopy, the nest of the Ibadan Malimbe was positioned towards the tip of the lowest branch, *c.* 4 m away from the nest of the Red-headed Malimbe.

The male was seen chasing the female (perhaps for mating) on two occasions on 22 Apr. On 29 Apr, the female spent *c.* 2 h in the nest before going out and returning after 2 min.. During this period, the male vigorously guarded the entrance of the nest, calling actively, and chasing and attacking intruding Yellow-mantled Weavers, one of which lost a wing feather during one of the attacks. This behaviour had not been observed before that, during nest building, which suggested it might be associated with incubation. The male did not chase nor attack the Red-headed Malimbe despite the fact that it came close to the nest of the Ibadan Malimbe several times.

Hatching was successful, as both parents were observed bringing food to the nest on 13 May. Monitoring for a total of 16 h between 7h00 and 13h00 on 13, 20 and 23 May showed that food was brought for at least 11 days. Provisioning by the male was more frequent (129 times) than by the female (66 times). The main food was green insect larvae (Fig. 3). Food provisioning declined gradually, with the male providing food 58, 42 and 29 times and the female 28, 20 and 18 times on the three days respectively. No activity was observed around the nest site the next day (24 May); therefore we started looking for the fledglings, searching within a 4-km radius of the nest site between 24 May and 4 June. On 4 June, we sighted a juvenile female in a tree canopy *c.* 200 m away from the nest. It was being fed by two adults and was restless. The parents raised the alarm immediately they noticed us, so we did not approach to

Figure 3. Male Ibadan Malimbe providing insect larvae for nestling, 13 May 2017 (photo: AGA).

take photographs as we wanted to minimize disturbance. Nevertheless, we observed that the juvenile had dark brown plumage with dull red on the nape, crown and breast, a pale brown mask and bill, and resembled overall the colouration described by Borrow & Demey (2010). Thereafter, we inspected the nest and nest tree in order to know if it would be used for further breeding or roosting. Surprisingly, the nest was already derelict and about to fall off the tree. This suggests that the Ibadan Malimbe uses its nest for breeding only once and abandons it afterward.

Discussion

This seems to be the first successful breeding of the Ibadan Malimbe to be documented. Although our observations do not permit precision, they suggest that the incubation period was about 14 days, the nestling period between 11 and 14 days and

(assuming the family we found on 4 June to be the same), the period during which fledglings remained dependent was at least 11 days.

In previous studies, competition with other bird species, such as the aggressively territorial Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*, for nest sites, nest materials and food, perhaps exacerbated by habitat loss, was a probable cause of observed nest failures (Manu 2001, Manu *et al.* 2005b). During our study no Fork-tailed Drongo nested close to the Ibadan Malimbe, though one was sighted *c.* 100 m away. Furthermore, our observations showed that nest materials and food seemed plentiful, as both were provided regularly at short intervals. The observation that food provisioning rate to the nestlings declined towards fledging resembled what has been previously observed for Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinigastrus* (Adeyanju *et al.* 2013).

All reported breeding attempts of Ibadan Malimbe have been in native trees, including *Ceiba pentandra* and *Celtis zenkeri* (Manu *et al.* 2005b). In April 2015, an Ibadan Malimbe nest was located on a *Daniellia ogea* tree within the campus of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, but it was probably predated by Yellow-mantled Weavers and was subsequently abandoned by the breeding pair (Bown 2015). These observations suggest that native tree species may be vital for the breeding success of the Ibadan Malimbe. While reducing habitat loss in natural areas is crucial, the restoration of degraded habitats with native tree species, such as those found in our study, may also be important for its conservation. As the Ibadan Malimbe occurs in community forests and farmlands (Manu *et al.* 2005a), it is important to raise public awareness about it. In this case we discussed with the landowners around the nest site and they promised to protect the area, especially the nest tree against illegal logging.

Although located between previously known sites (Fig. 1), our sighting of the Ibadan Malimbe in Agbado Ekiti, *c.* 80 km from the closest of them at Ifon and further north than any other, suggests the need for a thorough survey of the entire southwest of Nigeria to define more clearly the breeding distribution of this Endangered species.

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Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* mass mortality in The Gambia in June 2011, recent observations from Senegal, and evidence for migration patterns

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Summary

We report at least 103 Great Shearwaters *Ardenna gravis* found between 22 and 27 June 2011, washed up along 7 km of beach between Tanji Bird Reserve (13°22′0.6″N, 16°47′48.3″W) and Tranquil Beach (13°39′37.9″N, 16°75′62.6″W), Coastal Western Region, The Gambia. This discovery represents the first Gambian record of this species and at a time of the year that it was not expected in Senegambian waters. A photographic record was made *in situ* each day of the numerous shearwater remains, most of which had been scavenged by ghost crabs *Ocypode* spp. and some by Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus*. Measurements of 18 cleaned skulls are presented. We summarise published sightings of Great Shearwater for Senegal, Mauritania and the Cape Verde islands and provide new information for Senegal. Movements of satellite-tracked Great Shearwaters from their breeding grounds in the southern hemisphere to the North Atlantic are discussed as well as their foraging strategies during this migration. Starvation is proposed as the probable cause of the wreck. Pelagic studies during the rainy season and discussions with artisanal fishermen operating in Senegambian waters are needed to reveal the status of many seabirds in these under-explored waters.

Résumé

Mortalité massive de Puffins majeurs *Ardenna gravis* le long de la côte de la Gambie en juin 2011, et observations récentes au Sénégal. Nous rapportons au moins 103 Puffins majeurs *Ardenna gravis* trouvés rejetés sur 7 km de entre la Réserve d'oiseaux de Tanji (13°22′0.6″N, 16°47′48.3″O) et la Plage tranquille (13°39′37.9″N, 16°75′62.6″O), Coastal Western Region, Gambie, entre

le 22 et le 27 juin 2011. Cette découverte représente les premières données de l'espèce pour ce pays, et est inattendue en cette période de l'année dans les eaux sénégambiennes. Un enregistrement photographique a été pris chaque jour *in situ* des nombreux restes de puffins, dont la plupart avaient été nettoyés par des crabes fantômes *Ocypode* spp. et quelques-uns par des Vautours charognards *Necrosyrtes monachus*. Les mesures biométriques à partir de 18 crânes préparés sont présentées. Nous résumons les observations publiées du Puffin majeur pour le Sénégal, la Mauritanie et les îles du Cap-Vert, et nous rapportons de nouvelles informations pour le Sénégal. Les mouvements de Puffins majeurs suivis par satellite depuis les sites de reproduction de l'hémisphère sud vers l'Atlantique nord ainsi que leurs stratégies de nourrissage au cours de leur migration sont discutés. La faim est proposée comme la cause probable de la mort des oiseaux échoués. Des études pélagiques pendant la saison des pluies et des discussions avec les pécheurs artisanaux opérant dans les eaux sénégambiennes sont necessaires pour établir le statut de beaucoup d'oiseaux marins dans ces eaux peu explorées.

Mass mortality event

On 22 June 2011 at 1200, three well-separated gatherings of 12–30 Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus* each were observed feeding along 1 km of beach within the Tanji Bird Reserve (13°22′0.6″N, 16°47′48.3″W). The presence of three distinct feeding groups was unusual. Normally on Gambian beaches foraging Hooded Vultures congregate and scavenge in a single group, for example around a single dead fish even when many are scattered over a long stretch of the tide line. Hooded Vultures also frequently assemble in large groups on moribund Green Turtles *Chelonia mydas* and on the less frequent dolphin or whale strandings, when up to 160 birds have been recorded together (CRB pers. obs.). A closer approach revealed that each vulture group was feeding on a corpse of a shearwater. These were in various stages of being dismembered, but a fourth corpse was not being eaten and was intact apart from missing the eyes and viscera (Fig. 1).

All four shearwaters appeared newly washed up and fleshy. They were collected and identified as Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* by the dark cap, white collar, brown back, dark brown tail and white upper tail-coverts. Other large species, such as Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris borealis*, Scopoli's Shearwater *C. diomedea* and Cape Verde Shearwater *C. edwardsii* were eliminated due to the dark cap, back and tail rather than grey-brown plumage, and the dark rather than pale bill. Measurements (mm) of the most intact specimen (Table 1 specimen 1) were: length 520; tarsus 60; wing 338; tail 130. Its legs and feet were pinkish and its body cavity empty of viscera when it was collected, presumably having been already scavenged by the Hooded Vultures. The dull plumage on the cap and wing and the broad, pale fringes on the

wing coverts indicate that this bird was probably an immature. Most adults should be in primary moult in June but the wing feathers of this specimen were complete and of the same generation, again suggesting an immature. Another of the birds was a full skeleton with feathered underparts which were flecked with buff and grey, again indicating an immature (Table 1 specimen 2, Fig. 1), whose tarsus measured 62 mm.

From 23 to 26 June early morning walks by CRB along sections of the beach from Tanji fish-landing site to Tranquil Beach (Fig. 2) resulted in 98 additional Great Shearwater corpses being found. Many of these partial to near-complete skeletons had been cleaned by Tufted and African Ghost Crabs (*Ocypode cursor* and *O. africana*) and were lying near the entrances to crab holes (Fig. 3).

On 27 June a single putrefying specimen heavily infested with beetle larvae (*Dermestidae*) was found on the Bijol Islands (13°23′7.8″N, 16°48′49.3″W), offshore from Tanji (Table 1 specimen 3). Its wing measured 300 mm.

In all, five complete skeletons (including the bird in Fig. 1), 13 additional complete skulls (Fig. 4), 20 sterna, numerous long bones and feathers were collected and

Figure 1. Dorsal and ventral views of a Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* carcass (left and upper right) and underpart feathering of a second carcass (bottom right), salvaged at Tanji Bird Reserve, The Gambia, 22 Jun 2011. (Photos: CRB)

measured (Table 1). All specimens collected and prepared are stored in The Gambia with CRB. The measurements of skull height, skull length and bill length all lie within the known range for Great Shearwater but are too small to be *Calonectris* spp. (P. Scofield pers. comm.). None of the birds had any evidence of stomach contents.

During the five days of survey of the 6-km stretch of beach from Tanji fish-landing site to Brusubi, the high tide mark was littered with a near continuous line (*c.* 6 cm wide) of white and grey body feathers. It is reasonable to assume that these originated from a significant number of Great Shearwater casualties at sea, additional to the corpses found along the beaches. No gull or tern carcasses were found on these dates apart from one dying first-year Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* on the Bijol Islands.

Weather conditions along the Gambian coast were not unusual for this period, with the first notable coastal rainfall of 2011 registered on 25 June between 11h00 and

Table 1. Measurements (mm) of 18 Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* skulls collected in The Gambia, 22–27 Jun 2011.

Specimen	Skull height[1]	Skull length[2]	Bill length[3]
1	24	101	56
2	23.5	99	56
3	23	96.5	56.5
4	25	102	56.5
5	23	98.5	56.5
6	23	99	55
7	24	99	55.5
8	23	100	56 .5
9	23.5	97	54.5
10	23	99	56.5
11	24	101	56
12	23.5	99	56.5
13	25	101	57
14	24	98	55
15	23	98	55
16	23.5	100	55
17	24	95.5	47
18	24	96	52
Mean ± SD	23.7 ± 0.6	98.9 ± 1.8	55.1 ± 2.4

[1]Measured perpendicular to long axis, from the basioccipital bone (base of the cranium) to the high point of the parietal bone (crest of cranium).

[2]Longest distance from back of skull to tip of upper mandible.

[3]From naso-frontal joint (join between beak and skull) to tip of beak with the rhamphothecum (horny covering) absent.

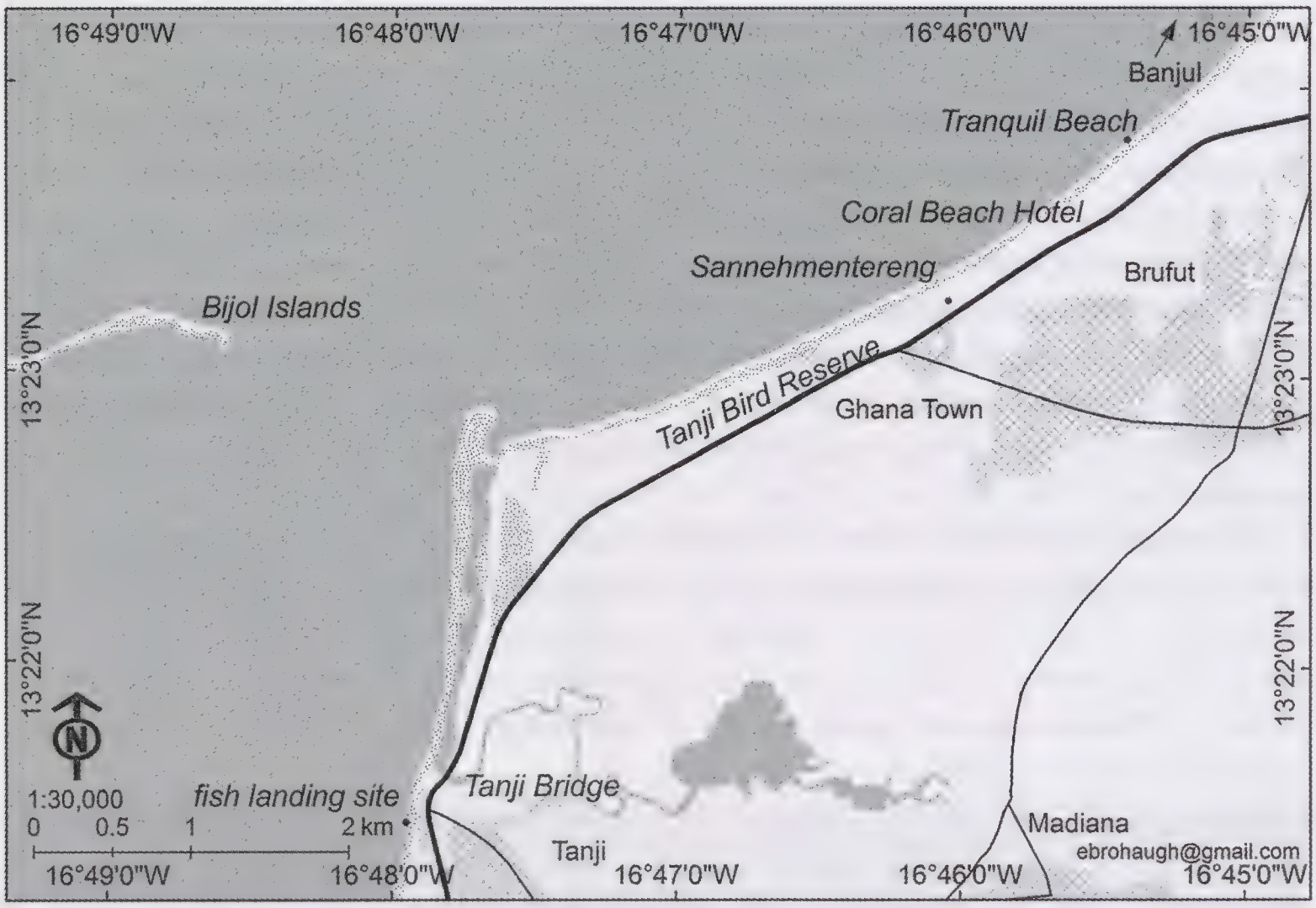

Figure 2. Map of the Gambian coastline where skeletal remains of at least 103 Great Shearwaters were collected, 23–26 Jun 2011.

13h00. The wreck was recorded well before the 2011 North Atlantic hurricane season began around the middle of July (<http://coast.noaa.gov/hurricanes>). The absence of

Figure 3. Left: partially feathered Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* skeleton adjacent to a Tufted Ghost Crab *Ocypode cursor* burrow, Tanji Bird Reserve, 24 Jun 2011. Right: Great Shearwater skeleton adjacent to an *Ocypode* sp. burrow, Brusubi, The Gambia, 26 Jun 2011. (Photos: CRB)

Figure 4. Eight Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* skulls collected between Tanji and Coral Beach, The Gambia, 22–26 Jun 2011. (Photo: CRB)

internal organs in all of the specimens recovered prevented finding evidence of plastic ingestion, but no plastic was found in the bill or trachea of birds found with these intact. As the remains were all of one species it seems unlikely that the cause of the mass mortality was natural or anthropogenic poisoning (*cf.* Furness & Camphuysen 1997, Jessup *et al*. 2009).

There have been no previous reports of live or dead Great Shearwaters in Gambian waters (Barlow *et al.* 1997, Borrow & Demey 2014); the observations presented here are thus the first documented records for the country. The continental shelf lies approximately 75 km off The Gambia, so very few pelagic species are recorded near the coast (Fox *et al.* 2015) although dead birds of otherwise unrecorded species may occasionally wash up, *e.g* a single Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus* on the Bijol Islands in May 2007 (Barlow 2017).

Senegal records and migration patterns

The Great Shearwater is a pelagic species that breeds on islands in the southern hemisphere (eggs laid November) and undertakes a trans-equatorial migration into the North Atlantic during the austral winter from April to October (Carboneras 1992, Onley & Scofield 2007). Between 2009 and 2014, 50 adult Great Shearwaters were fitted with satellite-tracking devices on Gough Island, Tristan da Cunha, resulting in 94 tracks showing their post-breeding migratory movements. They normally began their trans-equatorial migration into the North Atlantic between early May and the beginning of June, arriving on their feeding grounds off North America from late May to the end of June. Most spent time at well-known upwelling fisheries off the Patagonian coast before migrating northwards along South America. However, three birds made a stopover in the Benguela current in the East Atlantic between the end of April and the middle of May (J. González-Solís, T. Militão & L. Aranda pers. comm.). During the non-breeding season in the North Atlantic, the Great Shearwaters followed a circular migratory route from west to east following the prevailing winds, arriving off Europe in late summer. They continued south between August and mid-September off the West African coast, back to foraging grounds off South America. It is not known when juveniles and immatures begin to migrate and if they follow the same routes (T. Militão pers. comm.), but they may migrate south from the North Atlantic over an extended period between September and December, to arrive at the breeding grounds later than the adults.

Birds migrating into the North Atlantic from stopover sites in the Benguela current may have to travel closer to West Africa on their northward journey, so these may be the source of individuals found in The Gambia in June 2011. Tracking studies of immatures are required to confirm this. The tracking studies so far do not record Great Shearwaters in the East Atlantic in June, but they suggest that adults might occur in offshore Gambian waters during their southward migration in early autumn.

There are regular records of Great Shearwaters off the Senegal coast, where the species is considered a scarce visitor to deep offshore waters on prenuptial migration between September and November (Heim de Balsac & Mayraud 1962, Barlow *et al.* 1997, Borrow & Demey 2011). Very few are noted in October, which is by far the best documented period for seabird migration off Dakar, and the scant records suggest that there is a small peak in November. The species was thought to be more common in September, but a comprehensive seabird migration monitoring effort conducted in autumn 2017 (BP unpubl. data) failed to record it before mid-November, suggesting that this may not be the case. However, there have been few systematic seabird migration counts undertaken during this period, so it could occur off Dakar from August onwards. Other records of 1–2 Great Shearwaters in October and November have been documented, together with much larger numbers of other pelagic seabirds (Dubois *et al.* 2009). Recent observations off Dakar include an exceptional southward passage in early December 2017 (Table 2). There is one additional record from

January and one stranded bird found in March, both from Dakar (Dupuy 1984, Morel & Morel 1990). However, unusually, >100 Great Shearwaters were observed over the deep waters of the Kavar Canyon *c.* 25 km north of Dakar in June 2011 (P. Robinson pers. comm.), coinciding with the Gambian wreck reported here. Other rains period records are several groups off Îles de la Madeleine in July 1980 and two caught by fishermen in June 1982 (Morel & Morel 1990), seven flying north in June 1992 (Sauvage & Rodwell 1998) and two apparently migrating north in May 2017 (Table 2).

Elsewhere in the region the sporadic records of Great Shearwater fall mainly during the southward migration in August–December. Off Mauritania, the species has occasionally been noted during ship-based surveys in March, May, September and December (P. Browne pers. comm.). In the Cape Verde Islands, it is a frequent passage visitor, mostly recorded from September to December (Hazevoet 1995, 2012). It has been recorded off Guinea-Bissau recently but no details are available (M. Lecoq pers. comm.).

Discussion

There have been no known mortality events involving Great Shearwater in Mauritania, Senegal or Guinea-Bissau (W. Mullié, P. Browne, M. Lecoq pers. comm.). Mass mortality events are rare for this species, although they have been recorded previously along the eastern coast of North America where strandings of emaciated birds have been attributed to changing oceanographic conditions (Haman *et al.* 2013). Mees (1976) described a mass mortality event of Great Shearwaters in Surinam in June 1974. Mortality of Short-tailed Shearwaters *Ardenna tenuirostris* in the North Pacific has been linked to annual variability of prey abundance during migration

Table 2. Recent records of Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* during sea watches or pelagic expeditions, off Dakar and by BP unless otherwise stated.

Date	Number	Notes
4 Dec 2017	≥ 112	Migrating south with numerous Cory's Shearwaters, seen from coast in 70 min.
3 Dec 2017	*c.* 194	Migrating south with numerous Cory's Shearwaters, seen from coast in 40 min.
15 Nov 2017	3–4	During a pelagic trip (Fig. 5).
25 May 2017	2	Apparently migrating north, seen from coast.
19 Nov 2016	6	Migrating south, seen from coast.
11 Nov 2016	≥ 6	Migrating south, seen from coast.
19 Oct 2016	1	During a pelagic trip (N. Moran pers. comm.).
19 Sep 2015	1–2	Migrating south, seen from coast.
7 Sep 2015	1	300 km off Casamance, SE of Cape Verde (D. Lange <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S35186262>).

Figure 5. Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* off Dakar, Senegal, 15 Nov 2017. (Photo: BP)

between the southern hemisphere breeding grounds and feeding areas in the Bering Sea, leading to differences in body mass with the lowest values in the years of high mortality (Baduini *et al*. 2001a, Oka & Maruyama 1986). Reduced prey abundance in equatorial waters reduces the flight range and, therefore, the ability to locate new feeding areas, leading to starvation (Baduini *et al*. 2001b). Similar variability in prey abundance, due to climatic and weather anomalies during the Great Shearwater's migration can probably also lead to mass starvation. As observed for other shearwater species (Hedd *et al*. 2012), Great Shearwaters undertake long (>15000 km) migrations from stopover sites in Patagonian waters to wintering grounds in the North Atlantic in single flights lasting over two weeks without foraging. The Gambian mass mortality event during June suggests that these birds had failed to accumulate body mass at the pre-migration stopover sites or had drifted too far eastwards in the Atlantic to locate sufficient prey. The high proportion of emaciated juveniles amongst mass strandings in North America supports the hypothesis that the Gambian event was the result of first-year birds failing to complete the trans-equatorial migration (Haman *et al*. 2013).

Unusually warm oceanographic conditions as a result of climate change can lead to variations in the timing and distribution of the euphausiid abundance in the North Atlantic (Baduini *et al*. 2001b) and, therefore, the ability of this ecosystem to support large populations of seabirds. Pelagic species, such as Great Shearwaters, therefore serve as important indicators of ocean health. Usage of foraging areas at the continental shelf upwelling off the Senegambian coast by pelagic seabirds is poorly understood and would benefit from dedicated study, particularly during the rainy

season (summer) months, especially considering the currently developing fishing and fossil fuel mining operations in the region. Pelagic surveys would provide useful information on the status of seabirds in these under-explored waters. Discussions with artisanal fishermen operating from Gambian and Senegalese beaches regarding their observations of pelagic seabirds could also prove a valuable source of information.

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Short Notes — Notes Courtes

Range extension and breeding of the Northern Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes leuconotus* in southwest Nigeria

The Northern Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes leuconotus* is distributed in broadleaf woodlands and acacia savanna of Africa, foraging mainly on insects, acacia seeds and fruits of mistletoe (Borrow & Demey 2010). In Nigeria, the species is considered an uncommon to rare resident and the limited information indicates that breeding occurs between November and May (Elgood *et al.* 1994, Borrow & Demey 2010).

On 5 Feb 2017 at 8h56, while surveying birds in woodland near Oyan village, southwest Nigeria, we found a nest of the Northern Red-headed Weaver at 8.06491°N, 4.79455°E (*c.* 445 m altitude), and observed both parents providing food for nestlings (Fig. 1). The pendant nest was built mainly from tendrils of climbing plants and measured *c.* 50 cm in length. It was similar in structure to that described by Borrow & Demey (2010), with an extended spout, and with a woven thread attaching it to a branch of a Shea Butter Tree *Vitellaria paradoxa*, which was *c.* 8 m tall. No other nests were observed on this tree but birds seen within a 20 x 20 m quadrat around it included Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*, Sulphur-breasted Bush-shrike *Malaconotus sulfureopectus*, Senegal Parrot *Poicephalus senegalus* and Shikra *Accipiter badius*. The woodland was dominated by Nile Acacia *Vachellia nilotica*, Locust Bean *Parkia biglobosa*, Baobab *Adansonia digitata* and other

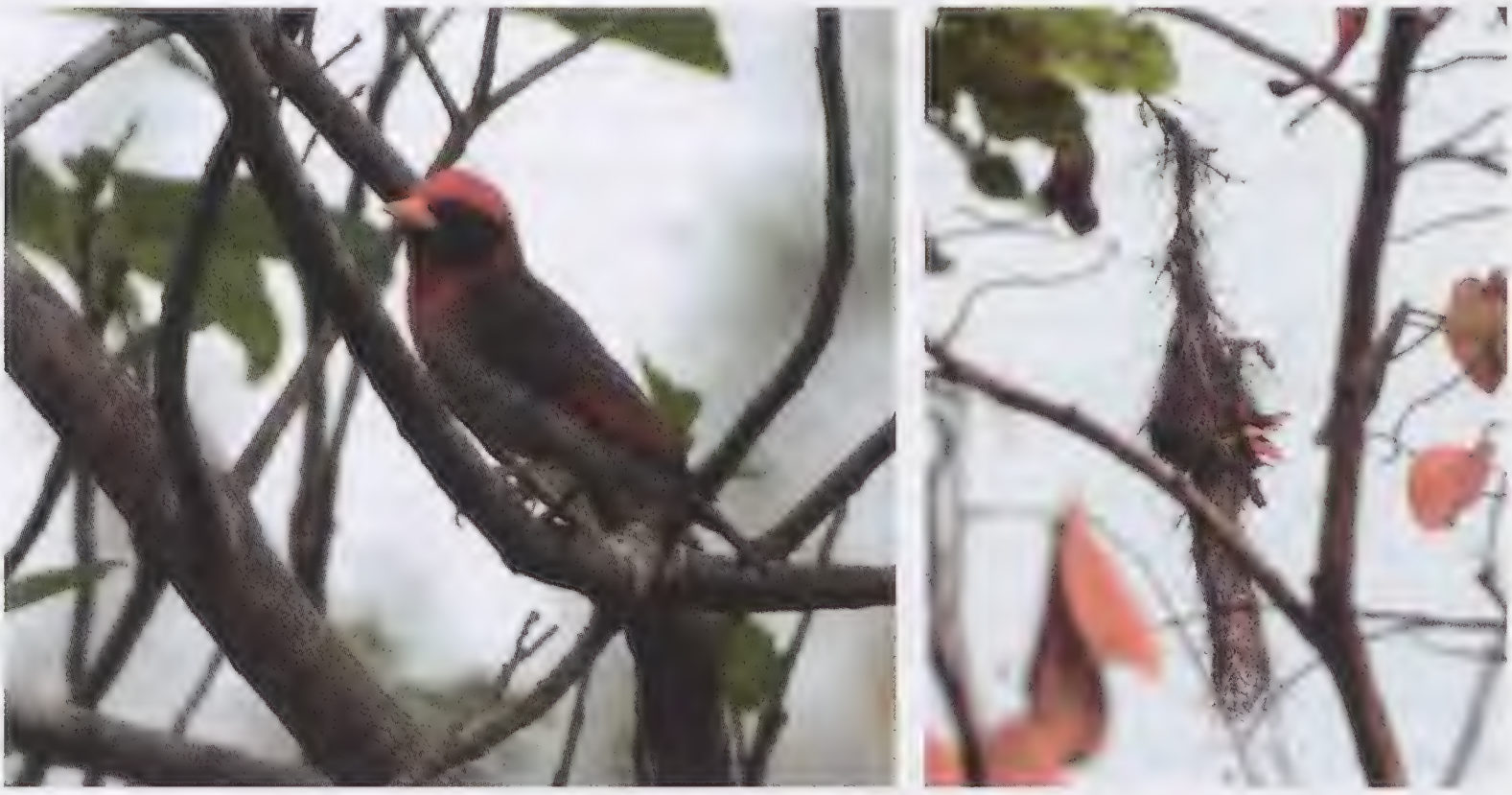

Figure 1. Male Northern Red-headed Weaver and its nest, near Oyan, southwest Nigeria, 5 Feb 2017 (photos: BA).

fire-resistant species, evidenced by the presence of thorny, thick and green bark left on the trees after a fire outbreak that preceded our survey. The fire had affected both canopy and ground cover, thereby exposing the nest. In the surrounding areas there were patches of secondary rainforest, gallery forests along watercourses, and farmlands. Our observation represents a southward range extension and a new breeding area, *c.* 230 km away from the closest previous sighting at Kainji Lake National Park, and *c.* 770 km from Gashaka National Park, the closest previously reported breeding site (Elgood *et al.* 1994).

We thank the entire Nigeria South West Atlas Team for their support. The Nigeria Bird Atlas Project provided logistics for the survey during which this observation was made. This is publication number 127 from the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute.

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Some recent records of note from Ghana

From 26 Jul to 11 Aug 2017, JB and MS took a private bird tour of Ghana guided by JN (trip report available at <https://tinyurl.com/GhanaBirds>). In addition, MS and JN had a further five days of birdwatching immediately preceding the period detailed in the trip report. Most records were as expected from JN's experience and Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett (2014), henceforth referenced as DLD. This note covers the few records that add to the body of knowledge about Ghana's birds as published in DLD.

Dendrocygna bicolor **Fulvous Whistling Duck.** Two adults with seven ducklings, less than a week old, Keta Lagoon, 24 Jul (MS & JN). They were on the eastern side

of the lagoon, at Afiadenyigba Wetlands (5°59N, 1°0′E), close to Kedzi. They moved from near the edge of the lagoon into a channel running through long grass, which took them out of sight. This is the first confirmed breeding record in Ghana, although DLD mention that Holman reported finding an abandoned nest which he took to be of this species at Keta Lagoon on 26 Jul 1942. DLD understandably question this record as there is no indication of how Holman could attribute the nest to this species.

Burhinus senegalensis **Senegal Thick-knee.** Up to four seen around the dams in the south of Mole NP, 4–6 Aug. DLD state "In the north most seem to leave at the peak of the rains … at Mole also not before early Nov".

Ispidina picta **Pygmy Kingfisher.** Recorded on most dates around Ankasa and Kakum National Parks (27 Jul to 1 Aug), generally in farmbush. DLD state "in the main forest zone found commonly in the dry season … and .... several records from the rains" but our experience indicates that they are frequent in the forest zone in the rains. All of these records were picked up on call (identified with confidence by JN), with brief glimpses of some of the birds. In addition, JB had an extended close view of one perched in the farmbush of the abandoned village of Nkwanta, in the centre of Ankasa NP, 30 Jul. Habitat change across the (former) forest zone may favour this species.

Psittacus erithacus **Grey Parrot.** The Grey Parrot population in Ghana has collapsed, caused by trapping for the pet trade in a country affected by significant deforestation, (Annorbah *et al.* 2016). We spent 12 days birdwatching in the rainforest zone formerly occupied by the species, during which it was encountered only twice: a single bird calling as it flew over the canopy at the Ankasa Gate entrance to Ankasa NP (5°13′N, 2°39′W) at dusk on 30 Jul, and three birds seen close to the rest house at the Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary (6°38′N, 1°17′W) on the afternoon of 7 Aug. A parrot trapper's makeshift ladder (Fig. 1) was seen on the trunk of a tree at Bobiri, but the birds flew elsewhere to roost. However, it is a sign that even in a small protected area, roosting holes are being targeted by parrot trappers. JB also saw a Grey Parrot on the university campus at Legon, Accra on 25 Jul, part of the urban population which DLD describe as feral.

Bocagia minuta **Marsh Tchagra.** A female seen in riparian woodland at Mognori (9°18′N, 1°47′W) on the edge of Mole National Park, 5 Aug (Fig. 2). It was perched on a bush at the edge of the woodland (along the roadside), then flew into cover. This appears to be the first record from Mole NP in 42 years. In 1968, several were observed "near water in wet orchard bush" and one was collected from the marsh near the park headquarters (Harvey & Harrison 1970, F. Dowsett-Lemaire *in litt.*), with further records probably from this marsh in 1974–5 (Greig-Smith 1976). In Ghana, Marsh Tchagra has its main distribution in the Guineo-Congolian to Sudanian transition zone. The old records from Mole were from an isolated population in the southern part of the Sudanian savanna. The furthest north that the species has been found more recently was close to the Black Volta River at Gbelwele (8°14′N, 1°47′W) (DLD). The Mognori record is 118 km further north. As few people visit Mole in the rains, when Marsh Tchagra is most readily detected, the Mognori record might indicate the survival of a small population there (F. Dowsett-Lemaire *in litt.*).

Figure 1. Parrot trapper's ladder, Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary, 7 Aug 2017. (Photos: MS, JN)

***Quelea quelea* Red-billed Quelea.** We saw at close range at least two birds, one a male in breeding plumage, with a small mixed flock of estrildid finches at 9°8′N, 1°20′W, close to pools by the Fufulso–Damongo road, 3 Aug. This is much further south than the regular range recorded by DLD, who state that it is a seasonally common visitor to the far north in the dry season (Dec–Apr), with two March records from Mole NP (in the same region of Ghana as our sighting) and one March record from the coast.

In addition, the following records support migration patterns given by DLD.
***Caprimulgus climacurus* Long-tailed Nightjar.** Three at Mole NP, 4 Aug. DLD: "a few stay in the rains" in the north.
***Merops malimbicus* Rosy Bee-eater.** Three at Kalakpa Resource Reserve (6°28′N, 0°29′E), 11 Aug. DLD: "a few early birds arrive in Aug".
***Gymnoris dentata* Bush Petronia.** One in the southern part of Mole NP, 6 Aug; one seen the next day in a maize field between Damongo and Fufulso. DLD: "A few remain almost throughout the north in the peak of the rains".

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Figure 2. Female Marsh Tchagra *Bocagia minuta*, Mognori, 5 Aug 2017. (Photo: JN)

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New records of Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* in southern Cameroon

The Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* is a widespread species with a range including the Americas, Africa and southern Asia. It is widely distributed in Africa, where it often appears to be locally migratory or subject to irregular movements (Brown *et al.* 1982, Scott & Rose 1996), and often occurs together with the White-faced Whistling Duck *D. viduata* (Borrow & Demey 2001). Among the waterfowl counted during studies from 1999 to 2004 in the Lake Chad Basin, including the floodplains on both sides of the Logone River in Cameroon and Chad, up to *c.* 9000 Fulvous Whistling Ducks and up to *c.* 150,000 White-faced Whistling Ducks were found (Dijkstra *et al.* 2002, Ganzevles & Bredenbeek 2005, Trolliet & Girard 2006). Sightings of Fulvous Whistling Duck in Cameroon have been limited to the north of the country, from the L. Chad basin southwards only as far as the Adamawa Plateau, with the exception of one record at Kribi (in the southwest) in 1934 (Louette 1981). Based on projected climate change its distribution is expected to shrink further northwards (http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/fulvous-whistling-duck-dendrocygna-bicolor/climate>, consulted 18 Oct 2016).

The first indication of the presence of Fulvous Whistling Duck at the Dschang Municipal Lake (5°20′–5°25′N, 9°56′–10°8′E; surface area *c.* 40 ha), was in February 2013, when NGL, during preparation for her master's thesis, photographed a lone individual of this species. It was accompanying a flock of White-faced Whistling Ducks, which were common at the lake during the boreal winter, usually following them and keeping a small distance behind (Fig. 1). Then, during a bird survey of the lake from October 2013 to March 2014, 61 bird species were recorded, including a single Fulvous Whistling Duck (Tamungang *et al.* 2016) which was observed throughout Jan–Mar (Fig. 1). This bird was also spotted in a flock of White-faced Whistling Ducks,

Figure 1. Fulvous Whistling Duck at Dschang Municipal Lake: left, with two White-faced Whistling Ducks, Feb 2013; right, 21 Feb 2014. Photos by NGL.

with juveniles. While adult Fulvous and White-faced Whistling Ducks can easily be distinguished, the former can be confused with juvenile White-faced Whistling Duck, especially when out of its usual range, since both lack the white patch on the side of the head. However, the distinct white streaking on the flanks of the Fulvous Whistling Duck (Fig. 1) helped to identify it (Borrow & Demey 2001).

We do not know whether it was the same bird that was present both years, but it seems likely that it could have been the same individual accompanying a flock of White-faced Whistling Ducks on their annual movements to and from the lake. However, the absence of the species during searches at the same location during Jan–Mar in 2016 and 2017 indicates that these records, the second and third reports south of the Adamawa Plateau, represent vagrancy rather than a range extension for the species.

We thank the Dschang Municipal Council for allowing us to undertake bird surveys to determine the effects of ecotourism infrastructural development on the birds of Dschang Municipal Lake.

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Society Notices — Informations de la Société

Editor's Report for the years 2015–2017

During the past three years, two issues of *Malimbus* have been printed each year as planned, but the annual page totals (Table 1) were well below the long-term average of 120 pages (since Volume 1). Since 2013 the annual rate of submissions has dropped sharply. This has happened before (2003–5, 2009–10), but in the present case the low rate has continued for longer. As a consequence, the two issues produced each year have all been rather slim. The proportion of submissions by West African authors continued to increase.

All full-length papers and Short Notes were reviewed by two (occasionally one or up to four) referees, in addition to the Editor. Referees are acknowledged in each issue as the "Editorial Board". Eight papers were rejected, seven of them owing to two or more of the following factors: inadequate data, inappropriate analysis, unjustified conclusions, studies outside West Africa of only local interest. In two cases the authors were encouraged to resubmit following a major reanalysis requested by referees, and the result was eventually published. One submission was withdrawn by its author in favour of a corrigendum published by the authors of a previous article. The average proportion rejected or withdrawn of those received the same year (25 %) was higher than that of any previous period, reflecting an increase in the rate of poor quality submissions, rather than a change in the criteria for acceptance. Rejection in all cases took place within three weeks of receipt of the manuscript.

All of the 30 scientific papers published, except two Short Notes, required revision following review by referees and Editor. The time taken by authors to revise their papers varied from same day to 22 months (median 1 month), a little faster than in previous years. Several papers required multiple revisions, with up to eight rounds of transmission between Editor and authors. The delay between receiving a final acceptable version of a paper and its publication was 1–7 months (median 3 months),

Table 1. *Malimbus* publication statistics, 2015–2017.

	2015	2016	2017
Number of pages	80	88	68
Scientific papers received	12	13	11
published	8	8	14
rejected or withdrawn	5 (42 %)	1 (8 %)	3 (27 %)
Reviews published	2	2	1
News & Comment (including Corrigenda) published	2	4	1
Society Notices published	4	3	5

shorter than in previous years but difficult to reduce further, given our 6-monthly publication schedule. Altogether, including the time taken for review by referees, editing by me, revision and proof-reading by authors, the delay between first receipt of a scientific submission (*i.e.* not including News, Notices and Reviews, which are always published in the issue immediately following receipt) and its publication was 1–28 months (median 6 months), shorter than previously, with 87 % of papers published within one year of receipt.

I should once again like to express my gratitude to all referees for their precious time and valuable insights, as well as to Joost Brouwer, Peter Browne, Tim Dodman and Nils Robin for their contributions to managing the journal's printing, distribution and mailing list, assisting with translations, and placing copy quickly on the web site.

Alan TYE

Rapport du Rédacteur en chef pour la période 2015–2017

Au cours des trois dernières années, deux numéros de *Malimbus* ont été imprimés par an, comme prévu, mais le nombre de pages (Tableau 1) a été sensiblement inférieur au nombre moyen de 120 pages par an depuis le Volume 1. Depuis 2013, le taux annuel de soumissions a fortement chuté. Cela s'était déjà produit auparavant (2003–5, 2009–10) mais dans le cas présent le faible taux s'est maintenu plus longtemps. En conséquence, les deux numéros publiés chaque année ont tous été assez minces. La proportion de manuscrits soumis par des auteurs ouest-africains, a continué d'augmenter.

Tous les manuscrits longs et Notes Courtes ont été revus par deux lecteurs (parfois un, ou jusqu'à quatre) en plus du Rédacteur en chef. Les lecteurs sont cités dans chaque numéro à la rubrique Comité de Rédaction. Huit articles ont été refusés dont sept pour au moins deux des raisons suivantes: manque de données, analyse inappropriée, conclusions non justifiées, études hors d'Afrique de l'Ouest et seulement d'un intérêt local. Dans deux cas, les auteurs ont été encouragés à soumettre de nouveau leurs articles après avoir largement revu leur analyse à la demande des lecteurs, et le résultat a finalement été publié. Une soumission a été retirée par son auteur après un *corrigendum*

Table 1. Statistiques de publication de *Malimbus* pour 2015–2017.

	2015	2016	2017
Nombre de pages	80	88	68
Articles scientifiques reçus	12	13	11
publiés	8	8	14
refusés ou retirés	5 (42 %)	1 (8 %)	3 (27 %)
Recensions publiées	1	2	1
Nouvelles & Commentaires publiées (Errata inclus)	2	4	1
Informations de la Société publiées	4	3	5

publié par les auteurs d'un article antérieur. La proportion moyenne de manuscrits refusés par rapport à ceux reçus la même année (25 %) a été plus élevée que pendant toutes les périodes précédentes, ce qui reflet une augmentation du taux de soumissions de qualité insuffisante, plutôt qu'un changement des critères d'acceptation. Dans tous les cas, le refus a été notifié dans un délai de trois semaines après la soumission.

Tous les 30 articles scientifiques publiés, à l'exception de deux Notes Courtes, ont nécessité une révision par leurs auteurs, après lecture par les lecteurs et le Rédacteur en chef. Le temps mis par les auteurs pour réviser leurs articles a varié du jour même à 22 mois (médiane 1 mois), un peu moins que dans les années précédentes. Plusieurs articles ont nécessité des révisions multiples, jusqu'à huit échanges entre le Rédacteur en chef et les auteurs. Le délai entre la réception de la version définitive acceptable d'un manuscrit et sa publication a été de 1–7 mois (médiane 3 mois), inférieur à celui des années précédentes et difficile à réduire davantage, étant donné notre rythme de parution semestriel. Au total, en prenant en compte le temps pris par les critiques, mes propres corrections, et la révision et les lectures d'épreuves par les auteurs, le délai entre la première réception d'un manuscrit scientifique (c'est à dire non compris les Nouvelles, Informations et Revues, qui sont toujours publiées dans le numéro suivant immédiatement leur réception) et sa publication a varié de 1–28 mois (médiane 6 mois), moins que dans les années antérieures, et avec 87 % des articles publiés dans les 12 mois de leur réception.

Je veux de nouveau remercier tous les lecteurs pour le temps et les avis qu'ils ont généreusement donnés, ainsi que Joost Brouwer, Peter Browne, Tim Dodman et Nils Robin, qui ont contribué à l'impression du journal, à sa distribution, à la tenue de la liste des abonnés, ainsi que pour leur assistance en matière de traductions ou pour en avoir rapidement mis copie sur le site Internet.

Alan TYE

P.W. Peter Browne, Honorary Life Member of WAOS

Peter Browne joined WAOS in 1987, accepted the Council position as webmaster in 2004, and has been our webmaster for most of the 13 years up to 2017. Now that he has passed on this role to Sam Ivande, Council felt that it would be a fitting tribute to Peter's contributions to the society and to West African ornithology to offer him Honorary Life Membership of WAOS.

Apart from managing the web site, Peter has been an active participant in Council deliberations over this period, and has been a regular referee of articles submitted to *Malimbus* on the birds of Mauritania. He has himself made valuable contributions to the ornithology of that country, where he lived from 1978 to 1982. His publications on West African ornithology (most of them in *Malimbus*) are listed at the end of this

article. They include co-authorship of *Birds of Mauritania*, and Peter conceived and set up the *Atlas of the Birds of Mauritania* (<http://atlasornmau.org>) to complement that book. Peter began the atlas project by digitising the bird records from the country, creating a database of the records, and maintaining it since 2008; in 2016 he began work to pass the atlas project on to Nature Mauritanie.

Peter was at first hesitant to accept the offer of a United Nations position in Mauritania, as he had previously been working in Burundi and Togo. Having become used to living and bird-watching in relatively well-watered parts of Africa, he imagined that conditions in Mauritania would be bleak. Also, Peter's wife Shirley would not accompany him on this assignment because she felt their four children needed stability in their education and should stay in Canada with her. But difficulty in finding suitable employment back home and the generous home-leave provisions of a UN posting persuaded him to accept. The work (processing population census data on the country's first computer) turned out interesting, living conditions not so bad (plenty of water pumped from artesian wells to the capital, important for both people and birds!), and mail, telephone, frequent visitors and home leave provided good contact with family and friends. The birds were a welcome throw-back to his experiences in Aden in the 1940s, when on national service in the Royal Air Force: similar migrants and Sahel residents. Mauritania was little explored ornithologically, giving the opportunity to make interesting observations and eventually leading to the idea of an atlas, not only of breeding birds but also showing where each species had been observed, including the localities of Holarctic migrants wintering in Mauritania, (in this atlas, Peter seems to have been the first to use the term "Holarctic" rather than the usual but too limited "Palaearctic", for migrants to Mauritania).

Living in Mauritania gave Peter the opportunity to meet Gérard and Marie-Yvonne Morel, who lived only 200 km away in northern Senegal, and they became close friends. Gérard, WAOS President at that time, wanted the Society to have its own website and persuaded his grandson, Julien Guyonet, to create the first version. However, Julien did not have time to develop it fully, so Gérard accepted Peter's offer to work with Julien and the hand-over to Peter's management of the site took place in 2003–4.

The website as originally conceived by Julien contained information about WAOS in both French and English, including history, area covered, how to join, rules for grants, and details of Council members. The bilingual quality, part of the mandate of the Society and dear to Gérard, is still maintained, and Peter, although competent in French, has relied on French members of Council, especially Nils Robin, to ensure accurate French language content.

In consultation with Council members regarding other material to include on the site, it was agreed that prominence should be given to *Malimbus* and its predecessor *Bulletin of the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society*. Tools were established to facilitate finding material in these publications: tables of contents, summaries of articles, country pages listing articles on birds of that country, and indexes of scientific,

English and French names of birds, constructed using indexes compiled by John Elgood and Bob Dowsett. Council also decided that the full text of its publications should appear on the website as open access five years after publication, and pdfs of all items from *Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.* 1 up to *Malimbus* 34 are now available. Issues printed before 2002 had no original digital version available so Peter arranged for paper copies to be scanned, borrowing from members when necessary. Another practical feature, which Peter developed with Tim Dodman and added in 2010, is the facility for online payments. This enables subscriptions to be paid from virtually anywhere in the world and has been adopted by about 20% of paying members.

Site usage statistics show that visits have averaged around 100 per day, by users from over 135 countries, with the USA and France supplying most. The most frequently consulted pages have been the tables of contents and full texts of articles.

There can be no better conclusion to this notice than this from Peter's own, characteristic response to the offer of Hon. Life Membership: "Though I am indeed glad that my time as webmaster of WAOS, as well as other activities, helped promote ornithology in West Africa, I should let you know that it also helped me learn some of the principles and practices of website design, which were a mystery to me when I took on the job, even after some 45 years working in the computer field! So I thank WAOS for giving me the chance to advance my knowledge so aptly, and helping to keep my brain functioning well throughout my 80s. As my successor Sam Ivande has made clear, over the last 15 years or so the field has moved on and there are now better ways of doing things, but I had a lot of fun learning, and developing what was needed. I'm confident that, with the new arrangements, the WAOS website will go on from strength to strength."

WAOS Council

P.W. Peter Browne, Membre Honoraire à Vie de la SOOA

Peter Browne a adhéré à la SOOA en 1987 et accepté d'en être le webmestre au sein du Conseil en 2004, fonction qu'il aura exercée pendant près de 13 ans jusqu'en 2017. À présent qu'il a passé le relai à Sam Ivande, le Conseil a estimé que ce serait un hommage mérité en considération de ses contributions à la Société et à l'ornithologie en Afrique de l'Ouest de le faire Membre Honoraire à Vie de la SOOA.

Outre l'administration du site internet, Peter a été un participant actif aux délibérations du Conseil pendant toute cette période ainsi qu'un relecteur habituel des articles soumis à *Malimbus* sur les oiseaux de Mauritanie. Il est lui-même l'auteur de contributions de valeur à l'ornithologie de ce pays, où il a vécu de 1978 à 1982. La liste de ses publications sur l'ornithologie en Afrique de l'Ouest (pour la plupart dans *Malimbus*) figure en fin du présent article. Peter est notamment co-auteur des *Oiseaux de Mauritanie* et il a créé l'*Atlas of the Birds of Mauritania* (<http://atlasornmau.org>) pour compléter ce livre. Peter a commencé le projet d'atlas par la saisie informatique des observations d'oiseaux dans le pays, en créant une base de données des

observations dont il assure la maintenance depuis 2008; en 2016, il a entrepris de transmettre le projet d'atlas à Nature Mauritanie.

Peter a d'abord hésité à accepter l'offre de poste des Nations Unies en Mauritanie, alors qu'il avait auparavant travaillé au Burundi et au Togo. Accoutumé à vivre et observer les oiseaux dans des parties de l'Afrique relativement bien arrosées, il s'imaginait que les conditions en Mauritanie seraient tristes. D'autre part, Shirley, la femme de Peter, ne devait pas l'accompagner dans cette affectation parce qu'elle pensait que leurs quatre enfants avaient besoin de stabilité pour leur éducation et devaient rester au Canada avec elle. Mais la difficulté de trouver un emploi convenable de retour à son pays et les généreuses indemnités d'expatriation pour un poste des Nations Unies l'ont convaincu d'accepter. Le travail (informatiser les données du recensement de la population sur le premier ordinateur du pays) s'est avéré intéressant, les conditions de travail pas si mauvaises (eau à volonté pompée à partir de forages artésiens jusqu'à la capitale, importante à la fois pour la population et les oiseaux!), et la poste, le téléphone, de fréquents congés et visites ont permis de maintenir un bon contact avec la famille et les amis. Les oiseaux l'ont renvoyé de manière plaisante à son expérience d'Aden dans les années 1940, lorsqu'il effectuait son service national dans la Royal Air Force: des migrants et résidents sahéliens similaires. La Mauritanie a été peu explorée sur le plan ornithologique, ce qui donnait l'opportunité de faire d'intéressantes observations et conduisait finalement à l'idée d'un atlas, pas seulement des oiseaux s'y reproduisant mais aussi pour montrer où chaque espèce a été observée, en incluant les lieux où les migrants Holarctiques passent l'hiver en Mauritanie (dans cet atlas, Peter semble avoir été le premier à employer le terme « Holarctique » , plutôt que celui trop limité de « Paléarctique », pour les migrants en Mauritanie).

Vivre en Mauritanie a donné à Peter l'opportunité de rencontrer Gérard et Marie-Yvonne Morel, qui vivaient au nord du Sénégal à 200 km, et ils devinrent de proches amis. Gérard, Président de la SOOA à l'époque, souhaitait que la Société ait son propre site internet et persuada son petit-fils, Julien Guyonet, d'en créer la première version. Cependant, Julien n'avait pas le temps de le développer complètement, aussi Gérard en vint à accepter la proposition de Peter de travailler avec Julien et la transmission à Peter de l'administration du site intervint en 2003–4.

Le site internet tel que conçu à l'origine par Julien contenait l'information sur la SOOA à la fois en français et en anglais, incluant l'histoire, la zone couverte, comment adhérer, les règles concernant les subventions et des précisions sur les membres du Conseil. Le caractère bilingue, un engagement pris par la Société et cher à Gérard, est toujours actuel et Peter, même s'il connaît bien le Français, s'est appuyé sur les membres Français du Conseil, en particulier Nils Robin, pour assurer l'exactitude du contenu en langue Française.

Après consultation des membres du Conseil quant à l'enrichissement du site, il a été convenu que l'accent devait être mis sur *Malimbus* et le *Bulletin of the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society* qui l'a précédé. Des outils ont été installés pour faciliter la recherche des informations dans ces publications: sommaires, pages par pays listant les

articles sur les oiseaux du pays, index des noms scientifiques, anglais et français, construits en utilisant les index compilés par John Elgood et Bob Dowsett. Le Conseil a aussi décidé de ce que le texte complet de ses publications devait être en accès libre sur le site cinq ans après publication: les pdf de tous les articles du *Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.* depuis le premier jusqu'au *Malimbus* volume 34 sont maintenant disponibles. Les numéros imprimés avant 2002 n'ayant pas de version électronique originale, Peter a organisé le scan des exemplaires papier, en empruntant aux membres quand c'était nécessaire.

Une autre avancée d'ordre pratique, que Peter a développée avec Tim Dodman et ajoutée en 2010, est la possibilité de paiement en ligne. Le paiement des souscriptions est ainsi rendu possible, virtuellement, à partir de n'importe où dans le monde. Il a été adopté par environ 20% des membres payants.

Les statistiques de consultation du site montrent qu'il y a environ 100 visites par jour, par des utilisateurs de 135 pays, en majorité des USA et de France. Les pages les plus fréquemment consultées sont les sommaires et le texte complet des articles.

Il n'y a pas de meilleure conclusion à cette note que celle caractéristique émanant de Peter lui-même, en réponse à l'offre de devenir Membre Honoraire à Vie: "Bien que je sois naturellement heureux que mon temps passé comme webmestre de la SOOA, et aussi avec d'autres activités, ait pu aider à promouvoir l'ornithologie en Afrique de l'Ouest, je dois vous avouer que cela m'a également aidé à apprendre quelques principes et pratiques de la conception d'un site internet, qui étaient pour moi un mystère lorsque j'ai pris cette fonction, même après quelques 45 ans passés à travailler dans le domaine de l'informatique! Aussi, je remercie la SOOA pour m'avoir donné si judicieusement l'opportunité de progresser et de m'aider à conserver un cerveau en bon état de fonctionnement à plus de 80 ans. Comme mon successeur Sam Ivande l'a clairement montré, au cours des 15 dernières années, le domaine a progressé et il y a aujourd'hui de meilleurs moyens de procéder, mais je me suis beaucoup amusé à apprendre et développer lorsque c'était nécessaire. J'ai confiance qu'avec les nouvelles dispositions, le site internet de la SOOA se consolidera de plus en plus."

Le Conseil de la SOOA

P.W.P. Browne: publications on West African ornithology — publications sur l'ornithologie de l'Ouest africain

1979. Les oiseaux sauvages de Nouakchott. *Bull. Club Amis Nat. Mauritanie*. 20 pp.
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W.A.O.S. membership changes
Changements à la liste d'adhérents de la S.O.O.A.

New and rejoined members — Membres nouveaux ou réinscrits

CAUCANAS, G., CORENA, Hôtel du Département, Tambacounda, BP 238, **Senegal**
FOREST, H., 23 rue de Beaumanoir, 37230 Fondettes, **France**
PASQUIER, C., 6 rue Gustave Flaubert, 31200 Toulouse, **France**
Bibliothécaire, STATION BIOLOGIQUE DE LA TOUR DU VALAT, Fondation Sansouire Le Sambuc, F-13200 Arles, **France**
DACHVERBAND DEUTSCHER AVIFAUNISTEN, An den Speichern 6, D-48157 Münster, **Germany**

Address changes and corrections — Changements et corrections d'adresse

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DR, **U.K.**
Alexander Library, EDWARD GREY INSTITUTE, Dept of Zoology, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PS, **U.K.**
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EW, **U.K.**

Tim DODMAN, Treasurer and Membership Secretary

West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest Africain

Revenue Account for the year ended 31 December 2017

Income	**£ Sterling**	**€ Euro**	**Total (£)**	**2016 (£)**
Subscriptions	2133	662	2720	2508
Interest and donations	0	0	0	0
	2133	662	2720	2508
Expenditure				
Malimbus production and distribution	1979	0	1979	2831
WAOS web site	350	0	350	0
WAOS leaflet for PAOC14	0	270	239	0
Bank charges and office costs	0	15	13	6
	2329	285	2582	2838
Surplus/deficit per account for year	–197	377	138	–330

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2017

Bank balances at 1 January	576	4785	4658	4524
Surplus/deficit for year	–197	377	138	–330
Transfer from Euro to Sterling account	1728	–2000	-	-
Exchange rate gains/losses	-	-	119	464
Bank balances at 31 December	£2107	€3162	*£4915	£4658

*Combined balance in £ Sterling as at 31 December (€1 = £0.888).

Notes

There was a surplus of £138 during 2017, mainly due to a lower cost for production and distribution of *Malimbus* and an increase in income from subscriptions. *Malimbus* costs were higher in 2016 due to a bulk purchase of stamps. Two one-off costs accounted this year were the production of a WAOS leaflet for distribution at the Pan-African Ornithological Congress (PAOC14) late in 2016 and the set-up of the new WAOS website. The combined balance increased from last year by £257, a result of the 2017 surplus of £138 combined with a gain of £167 on the Euro balance of 1 Jan 2017 (due to an increase in the value of the Euro against the Pound from 0.853 on 1 January to 0.888 on 31 December) and a loss of £48 related to a transfer from the Euro account to the sterling account. Any apparent errors of £1 in the above tables are due to rounding. The sterling balance comprised £568 in the bank and £7 in cash on 1 Jan 2017, and £2104 in the bank and £3 in cash on 31 Dec 2017. Thanks to Nils and Marine Robin for managing the Euro account.

Tim DODMAN, Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Instructions for Authors

Malimbus publishes research articles, reviews and news about West African ornithology.

Papers and **Short Notes** must be original contributions; material published elsewhere, in whole or in part, will not normally be accepted. Short Notes are articles not exceeding 1500 words (including references) or four printed pages in length. Wherever possible, manuscripts should first have been critically scrutinised by at least one other ornithologist or biologist before submission. Manuscripts will be sent for critical review to specialist reviewers.

Items for **News & Comment** should not exceed 1000 words.

Contributions are accepted in English or French; editorial assistance will be made available to authors whose first language is not one of these. Submission by email (attached file) is preferred. Consult the editor for further details, *e.g.* acceptable software.

All Papers (but not Short Notes) should include a **Summary**, not exceeding 5 % of the paper's length. The Summary should include brief reference to major findings of the paper and should not simply review what was done. Summaries will be published in both English and French (or in the official language of the country in which the work was done) and will be translated as appropriate by the Editorial Board.

Format of tables, numbers, metric units, references, *etc.* should match recent issues. Note particularly: authors' names should be listed with surname (family name) last, with given names or initials preceding it (*e.g.* John A. SMITH); dates are written 2 Feb 1990 but months standing alone may be written in full; times of day are written 6h45, 17h32 and coordinates as *e.g.* 7°46′13″N (no leading zeros) or as decimal degrees with up to five decimal places (*e.g.* 1.23456°N), but not as decimal minutes; numbers up to ten are written in full, except when followed by abbreviated units (*e.g.* 6 m), numbers from 11 upwards are written in figures except at the beginning of a sentence. All references mentioned in the article, and only such, must be listed in the bibliography.

Taxonomic sequence and **scientific names** of birds should follow the BirdLife International Checklist <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/taxonomy>, unless reasons for departure from this list are stated. **French names** should follow *Noms Français des Oiseaux du Monde* <www.digimages.info/listeoiseauxmonde/genre_cinfo.htm>. **English names** from the BirdLife Checklist, or long-established alternatives in common use in West Africa, are preferred. Adjectives such as "Common" and "African" should only be used if they are part of a long-established common name.

Avifaunal articles must contain a map or gazetteer, including all localities mentioned. They should include brief notes on climate, topography, vegetation, and conditions or unusual events prior to or during the study (*e.g.* late rains *etc.*). **Species lists** should include only significant records; full lists are justified only for areas previously unstudied or unvisited for many years. Otherwise, include only species for which the study provides new information on range, period of residence, breeding *etc.* For each species, indicate range extensions, an assessment of abundance (see *Malimbus* 17: 36) and dated breeding records; indicate migratory status and period of residence only if revealed by the study. Where appropriate, put data in context by brief comparison with an authoritative regional checklist. Lengthy species lists may be in tabular form (*e.g. Malimbus* 25: 4–30, 24: 15–22, 23: 1–22, 1: 22–28, or 1: 49–54) or in the textual format of recent issues. A **more complete guide for authors** of avifaunal papers, including the preferred abundance scale, appeared in *Malimbus* 17: 35–39 and a fuller version of this may be found at (http://malimbus.free.fr/instmale.htm). The Editor will be happy to advise on the presentation of specific studies.

When designing **Figures**, and particularly font size, pay attention to *Malimbus* page shape and size. Figures prepared in a graphics package and saved at high resolution are preferred. Low-resolution files and poor-quality scans will not be accepted. Authors are encouraged to submit **photographs** that illustrate salient points of their article. Photographs should preferably be in colour and at high resolution. Figures and photographs should be supplied as graphics files (*e.g.* jpg or tif), not pasted into a Word file. Consult the Editor for further advice.

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